

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City makes permanent repair on pipeline

On Tuesday, the city will begin a permanent repair of the pipeline coupling that failed on July 1, resulting in 3 million gallons of waste water spilling into Hewlett's Creek.

On Tuesday from 10-11 a.m., the site will be open to the media for pictures/video and city staff will be on hand to provide interviews and information. Because of the restrictive size of the site and safety concerns, this is the only time the site will be open during the repair.

The city plans to replace the device currently on the pipeline with a more heavy-duty coupling made of cast iron. Preparation work will begin Tuesday morning with excavation, material assembly, measurements and inspections. In order to make the actual repair, the city will have to shut down the Hewlett's Creek pump station, which is scheduled to begin at midnight.

In a test run last week, the city shut down the pump station and determined they could keep the station closed for about 3.5 hours before the backflow of waste water coming into the pump station becomes too great. At some point during the repair, the city will make the determination to finish the repair, or suspend activity until the next night at the same time to finish the repair.

Officials from New Hanover County and Wrightsville Beach will monitor their collection systems during the shut down since some of their waste water feeds into the Hewlett's Creek pump station.

In the weeks since the spill, the city has taken other preventative steps, and accelerated other planned improvements to the system. Highlights:

- A low flow alarm has been implemented at the Southside plant to detect low flow from the Hewlett's Creek pump station. This alarm system is still being fine tuned, but is now in operation on all three main pipelines coming into the plant; the alarm will also be put on the two remaining smaller lines once the system has been fine tuned.
- A design to replace two pumps and controls at the Hewlett's Creek pump station and to replace pump controls at the Bradley Creek pump station is near completion. Both are part of the Northeast Interceptor system. The budget for the projects is approximately \$1.3 million.
- Staff is also working on a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) document for a long-term project to construct an additional parallel pipeline between Hewlett's Creek pump station and the Southside Waste Water Treatment Plant. The scope of work for the project will include looking at other alternatives for improving reliability of the pipeline system.

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For more information, contact Public Information Officer Malissa Talbert at 342-2736.